

THE NEW CYCLE

Articles by H. P. Blavatsky

THE NEW CYCLE

THE LAST SONG OF THE SWAN

PREMATURE AND PHENOMENAL GROWTHS

H. P. BLAVATSKY SERIES • No. 18

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OBJECTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

- I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*
- II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*
- III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

The articles of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge which originally appeared in the *Theosophist*, *Lucifer* and the *Path*, were issued in pamphlet form by THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY, Los Angeles, U.S.A. For the benefit of students and inquirers in India, these are now being reprinted in an Indian edition.

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FOREWORD

THE first issue of the French Theosophical magazine, *La Revue Theosophique*, dated March 21, 1889, was launched by H.P.B. with a strong editorial titled "The New Cycle," the meaning of which becomes clear from what she says in this occultly explicit statement of the character and purpose of the Theosophical Movement. The editorial repeats ideas which she had earlier expressed in articles in the *Theosophist* (such as "What is Theosophy?" and "What Are the Theosophists?"—reprinted in the pamphlet, *Basic Questions*), but, written ten years later, goes beyond these discussions in its emphasis on the critical nature of the cycle, making a moving appeal to students to recognize and fulfill the responsibilities they have assumed. Addressing both inquirers and Theosophical students, H.P.B. seems to be speaking not only of that particular time (two years before her death) but also of the larger cycle encompassing our own present and the years to come. In this article H.P.B. gave warning of the exhaustion of the resources of modern materialism, predicting for believers in the "material shell" alone the keenest of disappointments.

"The Last Song of the Swan," published in *Lucifer* for February, 1890, gives insight into the mysterious cause of sudden epidemics of influenza, describing the ruthless impact of this ill through the centuries, and conforming the speculations of some physicians and chemists who connect ozone with its sudden outbreak in various parts of the world. From this subject H.P.B. turns to the self-sacrificing work of Sister Rose Gertrude, a young woman who had decided to continue the work of Father Damien in behalf of the lepers on the island of Molokai. She calls Sister Gertrude "a true Theosophist in daily life and practice," remark-

ing that she "is not only a great and saintly heroine, but also a spiritual mystery, an EGO not to be fathomed on merely intellectual or even psychic lines." The limitation of reasoning powers caused by "training and religious education," H.P.B. suggests, impedes but little the high egoic expression of the inner Individuality, which in compassionate service to those who suffer rises far above ordinary "religious" duty.

"Premature and Phenomenal Growths," which appeared in the *Theosophist* for December-January, 1883-84, is of particular importance for the light it throws on the future course of psychophysical evolution, and for the hints which help to explain what seem incongruous anomalies from any other point of view. In *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 445) H.P.B. refers to "peculiar children" who will be regarded as "abnormal oddities physically and mentally." In this article she discusses instances of such children, going on to speak of future changes in racial types, including color and longevity, along with more rapid maturation. Premonitory symptoms of these changes, eventually to become the rule, she says, 'are but so many more proofs of the end of one cycle and—the beginning of another.'

With this pamphlet—the thirty-seventh in the H.P.B. series—present publication of the major articles and periodical writings of H. P. Blavatsky comes to a close. The series makes no pretense at being "complete." With some few exceptions, the articles gathered and reprinted in these pamphlets have been those which have appeared—some of them several times—in past issues of *THEOSOPHY*, it being felt that these constitute the essential study materials for serious students, complementing the contents of H.P.B.'s books. It is planned, eventually, to issue these articles in book form, to make three volumes, compactly published for easy accessibility and frequent use. The pamphlets will be maintained in print because of their convenience for use with inquirers.

THE NEW CYCLE

WE cannot inaugurate this first issue of an official and strictly Theosophical Magazine without giving our readers some information that seems essential to us.

Indeed, the ideas held to this day with regard to the Theosophical Society in India, as it has been called, are so vague and so varied, that even many of our members entertain very erroneous views concerning it. Nothing could show more convincingly the necessity of making well known the goals we pursue in a Magazine devoted exclusively to Theosophy. Also, before asking our readers to become interested in it, or even to take up its study, they need to be given some preliminary explanations.

What is Theosophy? Why use this pretentious name, we are asked at the outset. When we answer that Theosophy is Divine Wisdom, or the Wisdom of the Gods (*Theo-Sophia*), rather than that of a God, a still more extraordinary objection is raised: "Then, are you not Buddhists? Yet we know that the Buddhists believe neither in a, nor several Gods. . . ."

Nothing could be more correct. But, in the first place, we are no more Buddhists than we are Christians, Mussulmans, Jews, Zoroastrians or Brahmins. Furthermore, concerning the question of Gods: we hold to the esoteric method of the *Hyponia* taught by Ammonius Saccas—*i.e.*, to the occult meaning of the term. Did not Aristotle say: "The Divine Essence permeating nature and diffused throughout the entire Universe (which is infinite), that which the *hoi polloi* call Gods, is simply . . . the first prin-

ciples"—in other words, the creative intelligent forces of Nature. From the fact that Buddhist philosophers admit and know of the nature of these forces as well as anybody, it does not follow that the Society—as a Society—is therefore Buddhist. The Society, in its capacity as an abstract corporation, believes in nothing, accepts nothing, teaches nothing. The Society *per se* cannot and must not have any religion, for it contains all religions. Cults are, after all, but external vehicles, more or less material forms and containing more or less of the essence of the One and Universal Truth. In its essential nature Theosophy is the spiritual as well as the physical science of this Truth—the very essence of deistic and philosophical research. As visible representative of the universal Truth, since it contains all religions and philosophies, and since each of them contains in its turn a portion of this Truth—the Society could not be sectarian, have preferences, or be any more partial than, say, an anthropological or geographic society. Do the latter care to what religion their explorers belong, so long as each of their members bravely carries out this duty?

Now, if we are asked, as has been done already so many times, whether we are deists or atheists, spiritualists or materialists, idealists or positivists, royalists, republicans, or socialists, we can only answer that each of these opinions is represented in the Society. I have but to repeat what I said just ten years ago in a lead article in the *Theosophist*, to show how much that which the general public thinks of us is different from what we really are. Our Society has been accused from time to time of the most baroque and contradictory misdeeds, and has been charged with motives and ideas that it has never had. What has not been said of us! One day we were an association of ignoramuses, believers in miracles; the next day, we were declared to be thaumaturgists; our aim was secret and entirely political, it was said in the morning—that we were Carbonari and dangerous Nihilists; then, in the evening, we were found to be spies salaried by autocratic and monarchic Russia. At other times, without any transition, we were believed to be Jesuits seeking to ruin French Spiritism. American Positivists saw in us religious fanatics, while the clergy of all nations denounced us as emissaries of Satan etc., etc. . . . Finally, our good critics with impartial urbanity divided all theosophists into two categories: *charlatans* and *dupes*. . . .

Well, men slander only those they hate or "fear." Why should

we be hated? As to fearing us, who can say? Truth is not always welcome and, perhaps, we utter too many *real* truths! Yet, since the day our Society was founded in the United States, fourteen years ago, our teachings have received wholly un hoped-for attention. The original program had to be enlarged, and the territory of our researches and combined explorations now extends towards unlimited horizons. This expansion was made necessary by the ever growing number of our members, a number still increasing daily; the diversity of their races and their religions requiring ever deeper studies on our part. However, although our program was enlarged, nothing was changed as to the three main objects, except, alas, with regard to the one dearest to our heart, the first, that is: Universal Brotherhood without distinction of race, color or creed. Notwithstanding all our efforts, this object has almost always been ignored, or has remained a dead letter, in India especially, thanks to the innate superciliousness and national pride of the English. Except for that, the other two objects, that is to say, the study of Oriental religions, especially of the ancient Vedic and Buddhistic scriptures, and our researches into the latent powers of man, have been pursued with a zeal that has received its reward.

Since 1876 we have been compelled to deviate more and more from the main highway of general principles, originally laid down, and to take ever widening subsidiary paths. Thus in order to satisfy all Theosophists, and to follow the evolution of all religions, we have been forced to travel clear around the globe, beginning our pilgrimage at the dawn of the cycle of nascent humanity. These researches have resulted in a synthesis which has just been sketched in *The Secret Doctrine*, certain portions of which will be translated in this Magazine. The doctrine is barely outlined in our volumes; and yet the mysteries unveiled therein concerning the beliefs of the prehistoric peoples, cosmogenesis and anthropology, had never been divulged until now. Certain of its dogmas and theories are in conflict with scientific theories, especially with those of Darwin; yet they explain and throw light on what to this day had remained incomprehensible; and fill more than one gap, left open, *nolens volens*, by official science. But we had to present all these doctrines, such as they are, or never to broach the subject at all. He who is frightened by these infinite prospects and would seek to reduce them by using the shortcuts

and the "flying bridges" artificially constructed by modern science over its thousand and one gaps, will do better not to enter the Thermopylae of archaic science.

Such has been one of the results our Society has achieved; a poor one, perhaps, but one that will certainly be followed by further revelations, exoteric or purely esoteric. If we speak thereof it is to prove that we do not preach any religion in particular, leaving each member utterly free to follow his own particular belief. The prime object of our organization, of which we strive to make a real brotherhood, is fully expressed in the motto of the Theosophical Society and of all its organs: "There is no Religion higher than Truth." Hence, as an impersonal Society, we must welcome Truth wherever it may be found, without partiality for any one belief as against another. This leads directly to a quite logical deduction: if we acclaim and welcome with open arms every earnest seeker after truth, it follows that there is no place in our ranks for the ardent sectarian, for the bigot, or for the hypocrite surrounded by a "Chinese wall" of dogmas, each stone of which bears the inscription: "No one may pass here." What, indeed, could be the position in our midst of a fanatic whose religion forbids all research, and does not admit the free use of reason—when the original concept, the very root from which grows the beautiful plant that we call Theosophy, is free and complete research into all the mysteries, natural, divine, or human!

Except for this restriction, the Society invites everyone to participate in its investigations and discoveries. Whoever feels his heart beating in unison with the great heart of humanity, whoever feels his interests at one with those who are poorer and less fortunate than himself; whoever, man or woman, is ever ready to lend a helping hand to those who suffer, whoever is fully conscious of the real meaning of "Egoism," is a Theosophist by birth and by right. He can always be sure of finding sympathetic hearts amongst us. Our Society is in fact a small, special humanity, where, as among mankind at large, one may always find his counterpart.

If it is objected that in it the atheist rubs elbows with the deist, and the materialist with the idealist, we answer: "What of it?" If an individual is a materialist, that is, discerns in matter an infinite potency for the creation, or rather for the evolution of

all terrestrial life; or else a spiritualist endowed with a spiritual perception the other one does not have, why should this prevent one or the other from being a good Theosophist? Besides, those who worship a Personal God or Divine Substance are far more materialistic than the Pantheists who reject the idea of a carnalized God but who perceive the divine essence in each atom. The whole world knows that Buddhism recognizes neither a God nor Gods. And yet the Arhat, for whom each atom of dust is as full of *Swabhavat* (plastic substance, eternal and intelligent, though impersonal) as he is himself, and who tries to assimilate this *Swabhavat* by identifying himself with the All in order to reach Nirvana, must in order to reach it follow the same Path of sorrows, of renunciation, of good works and of altruism, and has to lead as saintly a life, although less selfish in motive, as the beatified Christian. What matters the passing form if the goal pursued is the same Eternal Essence, whether that Essence appear to human perception under the guise of a Substance, of an immaterial Breath, or of a No-thing! Let us admit the PRESENCE, whether called Personal God or Universal Substance, and let us admit a *cause*, since we all see effects. But these effects being the same for the Buddhist atheist as for the Christian deist, and the cause being as inscrutable for the one as for the other, why should we waste our time pursuing an illusive shadow? In the final analysis, the greatest of materialists, as well as the most transcendental of philosophers, admits the omnipresence of an impalpable Proteus, omnipotent in its ubiquity throughout all kingdoms of nature, including man—a Proteus indivisible in its essence, without form and yet manifesting itself in all forms, which is here, there, everywhere and nowhere, which is the All and the Nothing, which is all things and always One, Universal Essence which binds, limits and contains everything, and which everything contains. What theologian can go beyond that? It is enough to recognize these verities to be a Theosophist; for such a confession amounts to admitting that not only humanity—even though consisting of thousands of races—but all that lives and vegetates, all that in one word is, is made up of the same essence and substance, is animated by the same spirit, and that, therefore, there is solidarity throughout nature, on the physical as well as on the moral plane.

We have already said in the *Theosophist*: “Born in the United

States of America, the Theosophical Society was constituted on the model of its mother country. The latter, as we know, omits the name of God from its constitution, lest, said the Fathers of the Republic, this word someday afford the pretext for a State religion; for they wanted to grant absolute equality in its laws to all religions so that all would support the State and all in their turn would be protected."

The Theosophical Society was established on this beautiful model.

As of today its one hundred seventy-three [173] branches are grouped into several Sections. In India these sections are self-governing and self-supporting; outside of India there are two large Sections, one in America, and the other one in England (American Section and British Section). Thus each branch as well as each member, having the right to profess the religion and to study the sciences or philosophies it or he prefers, provided that the whole remains united by bonds of solidarity and fraternity—our Society may be truly called the "Republic of Conscience."

While being free to engage in those intellectual pursuits that please him the most, each member of our Society must, however, give some reason for belonging to it, which means that each member must do his own chosen part, however small it may be, by way of mental work or otherwise, for the good of all. If he does not work for others, he has no reason for being a Theosophist. All of us must work for the liberation of human thought, for the elimination of selfish and sectarian superstitions, and for the discovery of all the truths that are within the reach of the human mind. This goal cannot be attained with greater certainty than through the culture of solidarity on the plane of mental work. No honest worker, no serious seeker, has ever returned therefrom empty-handed; and there are hardly any men or women, however busy they may be thought to be, unable to lay their moral or pecuniary mite on the altar of Truth. Henceforth it will be the duty of the Presidents of branches and Sections to see to it that there be no such drones who do nothing but buzz in the Theosophical beehive.

One further word. How many times have not the two founders of the Theosophical Society been accused of ambition and autocracy! How many times have they not been reproached with a pretended desire to impose their will on other members! Nothing

could be more unjust. The founders of the Society have always been the first and humblest servants of their co-workers and colleagues; always showing themselves ready to help others with the feeble lights at their disposal, and to support them in the fight against the egoists, the indifferent and the sectarians; for such is the first battle for which everyone must be prepared who enters our Society, so little understood by the general public. Besides, the reports published after each Annual Convention are there to prove this. At our last convention, held in Madras, in December 1888, important reforms were proposed and adopted. Anything resembling a financial obligation was discontinued, even the payment of 25 francs for the cost of a diploma having been abolished. Hereafter members will be free to donate what they wish, if their heart is set on helping and supporting the Society, or, not to give anything.

Under these conditions, and at this moment of Theosophical history, it is easy to understand the goal of a Magazine devoted exclusively to the spread of our ideas. In it we would like to be able to open up new intellectual horizons, to trace unexplored paths leading to the amelioration of humankind; to offer words of comfort to all the disinherited of the earth who suffer from a spiritual void, or from an absence of material goods. We invite all noble-hearted persons who would respond to this appeal to join us in this humanitarian work.

Every contributor, whether a member of our Society or merely in sympathy with it, can help us to make of this Magazine the only organ of true Theosophy in France. We are now facing all the glorious possibilities of the future. Once again the hour has struck for the great periodical return of the rising tide of mystic thought in Europe. We are surrounded on all sides by the ocean of universal science—the science of life eternal—bringing in its waters the buried and long forgotten treasures of vanished generations, treasures still unknown to the modern civilized races. The powerful current rising from the submarine abysses, from the depths where lie the learning and arts engulfed with the antediluvian Giants—demi-gods, though mortals hardly yet formed: this current blows us in the face, murmuring: “That which was, still is; that which is forgotten, buried for æons in the depths of Jurassic strata, may once again reappear on the surface. Prepare yourselves.”

Happy those who understand the language of the elements. But, where are those heading to whom the word element conveys no other meaning than the one given to it by materialistic physics and chemistry? Will the great waters carry them toward familiar shores when they will have been swept off their feet in the on-coming flood? Will they be carried toward the summit of a new Ararat, toward the heights where are light and sun and a safe spot to stand on, or toward a bottomless abyss that will engulf them as soon as they attempt to fight against the irresistible waves of a new element?

Let us prepare, and let us study Truth in all its aspects, trying not to ignore any of them, if we do not wish, when the hour will have struck, to fall into the abyss of the unknown. It is useless to rely on chance, and to await the approaching intellectual and psychic crisis with indifference if not with total incredulity, saying to oneself that if worse comes to worst, the tide will carry us quite naturally to the shore; for there is a strong likelihood of the tide stranding but a corpse! The battle will be fierce, in any case, between brutal materialism and blind fanaticism on the one hand, and on the other philosophy and mysticism—that more or less thick veil of the Eternal Truth.

It is not materialism that will have the upper hand. Everyone fanatically clinging to an idea isolating him from the universal axiom—"There is no Religion higher than Truth"—will find himself separated like a rotten plank from the new ark called Humanity. Tossed by the waves, chased by the winds, buffeted by this element so terrible because unknown, he will soon find himself swallowed up.

Yes, thus it must be, and it cannot be otherwise when the flame of modern materialism, artificial and cold, will be extinguished for lack of fuel. Those who cannot conceive of a spiritual Ego, of a living Soul, and of an eternal Spirit, within their material shell (which owes its illusory life only to these *principles*); those for whom the great wave of hope in a life beyond the grave is a bitter draught, the symbol of an unknown quantity, or else the subject of a belief *sui generis*, the result of mediumistic or theological hallucinations—those will do well to be prepared for the keenest of disappointments the future could have in store for them. For, from the depths of the muddy black waters of matter, hiding from them on all sides the horizons of the great beyond,

a mystic force is rising towards the closing years of this century. A mere touch, at the most, until now, but a *superhuman* touch, "supernatural" only for the superstitious and the ignorant. The Spirit of Truth is at this moment moving upon the face of these black waters, and, separating them, forces them to yield their spiritual treasures. This spirit is a force that cannot be either checked or stopped. Those who recognize it and feel that this is the supreme moment of their salvation, will be carried by it beyond the illusions of the great astral serpent. The bliss they will experience will be so sharp and so keen that were they not in spirit detached from their bodies of flesh, this beatitude would wound them like a sharpened blade. It is not pleasure that they will feel, but a bliss which is a foretaste of the wisdom of the gods, of the knowledge of good and evil, and of the fruits of the Tree of Life.

But whether the man of today be a fanatic, a skeptic, or a mystic, he must realize that it is fruitless to struggle against these two moral forces now unleashed and engaged in a fight to the finish. He is at the mercy of these two adversaries and there is no intermediary power capable of protecting him. It is but a matter of choice: to let oneself be carried away naturally and without struggle by the flood of unfolding mysticism, or else to struggle and react against the stresses of the moral and psychic evolution and to feel oneself swallowed up in the Maelstrom of the new tide. At this very time the whole world with its centers of great intellect and of human culture, with its political, literary, artistic and commercial centers, is in turmoil, everything is tottering, falling apart, and now tending to re-form. It is useless to blind oneself to this, useless to hope one will be able to remain neutral between these two warring forces; one can only be crushed, or has to choose between them. The man who thinks he has chosen freedom and who nevertheless remains submerged in this seething and foaming cauldron of filth called social life, utters the most terrible lie to his Divine Self; a lie that will blind this Self through its long series of future incarnations. All of you who waver on the path of Theosophy and of the occult sciences, who tremble on the golden threshold of Truth, the only Truth still open to you, since all the others have failed, one after the other—look the Great Reality now offering itself to you straight in the face. These words are for the mystically inclined only, for them

alone they will be of some importance; for those who have already made their choice they will prove vain and useless. But you Occultists, Kabalists and Theosophists, you know well that a word as old as the world, though new to you, has been sounded at the beginning of this cycle, and lies potentially, although not articulate for those others, in the sum of the ciphers of the year 1889; you know that a note, never before heard by the men of the present era, has just been sounded, and that a new kind of thought has arisen, fostered by the evolutionary forces. This thought differs from all that has ever been produced in the 19th Century; yet it is identical with what was the keynote and the keystone of every century, especially the last one: "Absolute Freedom of Human Thought."

Why try to kill, to suppress, that which cannot be destroyed? Why fight when one has no other choice than either to allow oneself to be lifted up to heaven on the crest of the spiritual tide, beyond stars and universes, or to be swallowed in the gaping abyss of the ocean of matter? Vain are your efforts to plumb the unsoundable in search of the roots of that matter so glorified in our century; for these roots grow in Spirit and in the Absolute, and do not exist, though being eternal. This continuous contact with flesh, blood, and bones, with the illusion of differentiated matter only blinds you; and the more you advance in the realm of chemical and impalpable atoms the more will you become convinced that they exist only in your imagination. Do you believe that you will really discover all truths and all the realities of being there? But, death stands at the door of all of us, ready to close it on the soul of the beloved escaping from its prison, on that soul which alone gave reality to the body; and is love eternal to be likened to the molecules of that matter which changes and disappears?

But perhaps you are indifferent to all this; if so, of what importance to you are the love and the souls of those whom you loved, since you do not believe in these souls? Be it so. Your choice is already made. You have entered the path that crosses but the arid wastes of matter. You have doomed yourself to vegetate there through a long series of lives, content henceforth with feverish hallucinations instead of spiritual perceptions, with passions instead of love, with the rind instead of the fruit.

But you, friends and readers, who aspire to something more

an the life of the squirrel in its ceaselessly revolving wheel; you who are not satisfied with the cauldron which is even boiling without producing anything, you who do not mistake hollow echoes for gold as the world for the divine voice of Truth, prepare yourselves for a future that few of you have dreamed of unless you have already set your feet upon the Path. For you have chosen the way which, in the beginning lined with thorns, will soon widen, and lead you straight to the Divine Truth. You are free to doubt at first; free not to accept on someone's word what is taught concerning the source and the cause of this Truth, but you can always listen to what the voice is saying, you can always watch the effects produced by the creative force which emerges from the depths of the unknown. The arid soil upon which our present generations are moving at the close of this age of spiritual starvation and material satiety, is in need of a sign, of a rainbow—symbol of hope—above its horizon. For, of all past centuries, the nineteenth is the most criminal. It is criminal in its fearful selfishness, in its scepticism that scoffs at the mere idea of something beyond matter; in its idiotic indifference to all that is not the personal "I"—far more so than any of the centuries of barbaric ignorance and intellectual darkness. Our century must be saved from itself before its last hour strikes. Now is the time for action by all who see the sterility and foolishness of an existence blinded by materialism and so ferociously indifferent to the fate of others. It is for them to devote their best energies, all their courage and all their efforts to bring about an intellectual reform. This reform cannot be accomplished except through Theosophy, and, let us say it, Occultism, or the Wisdom of the East. Many are the paths leading to it, but Wisdom is forever one. Artists foresee it, those who suffer dream of it, the pure in spirit know it. Those who work for others cannot remain blind before its reality even though they do not always know it by name. It is only the sight-headed and empty-minded, the selfish and vain drones deafened by the sound of their own buzzing who can ignore this high ideal. They will live until life itself becomes an unbearable burden to them.

Let it be known, however, that these pages are not written for the masses. They are neither a call for reform nor an effort to convert over to our views those who are happy in life. They are addressed only to those who are ready to understand them, to those

who suffer, to those who are thirsty and hungry for any reality in this world of shifting shadows. And why should those not have enough courage to give up their frivolous ways of life, above all their pleasures and even some of their business interests, unless the care of these interests is a duty owed to their families or to others? No one is so busy or so poor that he cannot be inspired by a noble ideal to follow. Why hesitate to blaze a trail toward that ideal through all obstacles, all hindrances, all the daily considerations of social life, and to advance boldly until it is reached? Ah! those who would make this effort would soon find that the "narrow gate" and "the thorny path" lead to spacious valleys with unlimited horizons, to a state without death, for one rebecomes a God! It is true that the first requisites for getting there are absolute unselfishness and unlimited devotion to the interests of others, and complete indifference as to the world and its opinions. To take the first step on this ideal path requires a perfectly pure motive; no frivolous thought must be allowed to divert our eyes from the goal; no hesitation, no doubt must fetter our feet. Yet, there are men and women perfectly capable of all this, and whose only desire is to live under the aegis of their Divine Nature. Let these, at least, have the courage to live this life and not to hide it from the sight of others! No one's opinion could ever be above the rulings of our own conscience, so, let that conscience, arrived at its highest development, be our guide in all our common daily tasks. As to our inner life, let us concentrate all our attention on our chosen Ideal, and let us ever look *beyond* without ever casting a glance at the mud at our feet. . . .

Those capable of such an effort are true Theosophists; all others are but members more or less indifferent, and quite often useless.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE LAST SONG OF THE SWAN

I see before my race an age or so,
And I am sent to show a path among the thorns,
To take them in my flesh.
Well, I shall lay my bones
In some sharp crevice of the broken way;
Men shall in better times stand where I fell,
And singing, journey on in perfect bands
Where I had trod alone. . . .

THEODORE PARKER

WHENCE the poetical but very fantastic notion—even in a myth—about swans singing their own funeral dirges? There is a Northern legend to that effect, but it is not older than the middle ages. Most of us have studied ornithology; and in our own days of youth we have made ample acquaintance with swans of every description. In those trustful years of everlasting sunlight, there existed a mysterious attraction between our mischievous hand and the snowy feathers of the stubby tail of that graceful but harsh-voiced King of aquatic birds. The hand that offered treacherously biscuits, while the other pulled out a feather or two, was often punished; but so were the ears. Few noises can compare in cacophony with the cry of that bird—whether it be the “whistling” (*Cygnus Americanus*) or the “trumpeter” swan. Swans snort, rattle, screech and hiss, but certainly they do not sing, especially when smarting under the indignity of an unjust assault upon their tails. But listen to the legend. “When feeling life departing, the swan lifts high its head, and breaking into a long, melodious chant—a heart-rending song of death—the noble bird sends heavenward a melodious protest, a plaint that moves to tears man and beast, and thrills through the hearts of those who hear it.”

Just so, “those who hear it.” But who ever heard that song sung by a swan? We do not hesitate to proclaim the acceptance of such a statement, even as a poetical license, one of the numerous paradoxes of our incongruous age and human mind. We have no serious objection to offer—owing to personal feelings—to Fénélon,

the Archbishop and orator, being dubbed the "Swan of Cambrai," but we protest against the same dubious compliment being applied to Shakespeare. Ben Jonson was ill-advised to call the greatest genius England can boast of—the "sweet swan of Avon"; and as to Homer being nicknamed "the Swan of Meander"—this is simply a posthumous libel, which LUCIFER can never disapprove of and expose in sufficiently strong terms.

Let us apply the fictitious idea rather to things than to men, by remembering that the swan—a symbol of the Supreme Brahm and one of the *avatars* of the amorous Jupiter—was also a symbolical type of cycles; at any rate of the tail-end of every important cycle in human history. An emblem as strange, the readers may think, and one as difficult to account for. Yet it has its *raison d'être*. It was probably suggested by the swan loving to swim in circles, bending its long and graceful neck into a ring, and it was not a bad typical designation, after all. At any rate the older idea was more graphic and to the point, and certainly more logical, than the later one which endowed the swan's throat with musical modulations and made of him a sweet songster, and a seer to boot.

The last song of the present "Cyclic Swan" bodes us an evil omen. Some hear it screeching like an owl, and croaking like Edgar Poe's raven. The combination of the figures 8 and 9, spoken of in last month's editorial,* has borne its fruits already. Hardly had we spoken of the dread the Cæsars and World-Potentates of old had for number 8, which postulates the *equality of all men*, and of its fatal combination with number 9—which represents the earth *under an evil principle*—when that principle began making sad havoc among the poor Potentates and the Upper Ten—their subjects. The Influenza has shown of late a weird and mysterious predilection for Royalty. One by one it has levelled its members through death to an absolute equality with their grooms and kitchen-maids. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* Its first victim was the Empress Dowager of Germany; then the ex-Empress of Brazil, the Duke d'Aosta, Prince William of Hesse Philippstal, the Duke of Montpensier, the Prince of Swarzburg Rudolstadt, and the wife of the Duke of Cambridge; besides a number of Generals, Am-

* "1890!—On the New Year's Morrow," *Lucifer* for January, 1890—see H.P.B. pamphlet, *Occult Symbols and Practice*, p. 8.—Eds.

bassadors, Statesmen, and their mothers-in-law. Where, when, at what victim shalt thou stop thy scythe, O "innocent" and "harmless" Influenza?

Each of these royal and semi-royal Swans has sung his last song, and gone "to that bourne" whence *every* "traveller returns,"—the aphoristical verse to the contrary, notwithstanding. Yea, they will now solve the great mystery for themselves, and Theosophy and its teaching will get more adherents and believers among royalty in "heaven," than it does among the said caste on earth.

Apropos of Influenza—miscalled the "Russian," but which seems to be rather the scape-goat, while it lasts, for the sins of omission and commission of the medical faculty and its fashionable physicians—what is it? Medical authorities have now and then ventured a few words sounding very learned, but telling us very little about its true nature. They seem to have picked up now and then a clue of pathological thread pointing rather vaguely, if at all, to its being due to bacteriological causes; but they are as far off a solution of the mystery as ever. The practical lessons resulting from so many and varied cases have been many, but the deductions therefrom do not seem to have been numerous or satisfactory.

What is in reality that unknown monster, which seems to travel with the rapidity of some sensational news started with the object of dishonouring a fellow creature; which is almost ubiquitous; and which shows such strange discrimination in the selection of its victims? Why does it attack the rich and the powerful far more in proportion than it does the poor and the insignificant? Is it indeed only "an agile microbe" as Dr. Symes Thomson would make us think? And is it quite true that the *influentia* Bacillus (no pun meant) has just been apprehended at Vienna by Drs. Jolles and Wechselbaum—or is it but a snare and a delusion like so many other things? Who knoweth? Still the face of our unwelcome guest—the so-called "Russian Influenza" is veiled to this day, though its body *is* heavy to many, especially to the old and the weak, and almost invariably fatal to invalids. A great medical authority on epidemics, Dr. Zedekauer, has just asserted that that disease has ever been the precursor of cholera—at St. Petersburg, at any rate. This is, to say the least, a very strange statement. That which is now called "influenza," was known before as the *grippe*, and the latter was known in Europe as an epidemic, cen-

turies before the cholera made its first appearance in so-called civilized lands. The biography and history of Influenza, *alias* "grippe," may prove interesting to some readers. This is what we gather from authoritative sources.

The earliest visit of it, as recorded by medical science, was to Malta in 1510. In 1577 the young influenza grew into a terrible epidemic, which travelled from Asia to Europe to disappear in America. In 1580 a new epidemic of *grippe* visited Europe, Asia and America, killing *the old people, the weak and the invalids*. At Madrid the mortality was enormous, and in Rome alone 9,000 persons died of it. In 1590 the influenza appeared in Germany; thence passed, in 1593, into France and Italy. In 1658-1663 it visited Italy only; in 1669, Holland; in 1675, Germany and England; and in 1691, Germany and Hungary. In 1729 all Europe suffered most terribly from the "innocent" visitor. In London alone 908 men died from it the first week; upwards of 60,000 persons suffering from it, and 30 per cent dying from catarrh or influenza at Vienna. In 1732 and 1733, a new epidemic of the *grippe* appeared in Europe, Asia and America. It was almost as universal in the years 1737 and 1743, when London lost by death from it, during one week, over 1,000 men. In 1762, it raged in the British army in Germany. In 1775 an almost countless number of cattle and domestic animals were killed by it. In 1782, 40,000 persons were taken ill *on one day*, at St. Petersburg. In 1830, the influenza made a successful journey round the world—that only time—as *the first pioneer* of cholera. It returned again from 1833 to 1837. In the year 1847, it killed more men in London than the cholera itself had done. It assumed an epidemic character once more in France, in 1858.

We learn from the St. Petersburg *Novoyé Vremya* that Dr. Hirsh shows from 1510 to 1850 over 300 great epidemics of *grippe* or *influenza*, both general and local, severe and weak. According to the above-given data, therefore, the influenza having been this year very weak at St. Petersburg, can hardly be called "Russian." That which is known of its characteristics shows it, on the contrary, as of a most impartially cosmopolitan nature. The extraordinary rapidity with which it acts, secured for it in Vienna the name of *Blitz catarrhe*. It has nothing in common with the ordinary *grippe*, so easily caught in cold and damp weather; and

it seems to produce no special disease that could be localized, but only to act most fatally on the nervous system and especially on the lungs. Most of the deaths from influenza occur in consequence of lung-paralysis.

All this is very significant. A disease which is epidemic, yet not contagious; which acts everywhere, in clean as in unclean places, in sanitary as well as in unsanitary localities, hence needing very evidently no centres of contagion to start from; an epidemic which spreads at once like an air-current, embracing whole countries and parts of the world; striking at the same time the mariner, in the midst of the ocean, and the royal scion in his palace; the starving wretch of the world's White-chapels, sunk in and soaked through with filth, and the aristocrat in his high mountain *sanitarium*, like Davos in Engadin,¹ where no lack of sanitary arrangements can be taken to task for it—such a disease can bear no comparison with epidemics of the ordinary, common type, *e.g.*, such as the cholera. Nor can it be regarded as caused by parasites or microscopical microbes of one or the other kind. To prove the fallacy of this idea in her case, the dear old influenza attacked most savagely Pasteur, the “microbe-killer,” himself, and his host of assistants. Does it not seem, therefore, as if the causes that produced influenza were rather cosmical than bacterial; and that they ought to be searched for rather in those abnormal changes in our atmosphere that have well nigh thrown into confusion and shuffled seasons all over the globe for the last few years—than in anything else?

It is not asserted for the first time now that all such mysterious epidemics as the present influenza are due to an abnormal exuberance of ozone in the air. Several physicians and chemists of note have so far agreed with the occultists, as to admit that the tasteless, colourless and inodorous gas known as oxygen—“the life supporter” of all that lives and breathes—does get at times into family difficulties with its colleagues and brothers, when it tries to get over their heads in volume and weight and becomes heavier than is its wont. In short—oxygen becomes ozone. That would account probably for the preliminary symptoms of in-

¹ “Colonel the Hon. George Napier will be prevented from attending the funeral of his father, Lord Napier of Magdala, by a severe attack of influenza at Davos, Switzerland.”—*The Morning Post* of January 21, 1890.

fluenza. Descending, and spreading on earth with an extraordinary rapidity, oxygen would, of course, produce a still greater combustion: hence the terrible heat in the patient's body and the paralysis of rather weak lungs. What says Science with respect to ozone: "It is the exuberance of the latter under the powerful stimulus of electricity in the air, that produces in nervous people that unaccountable feeling of fear and depression which they so often experience before a storm." Again: "the quantity of ozone in the atmosphere varies with the meteorological condition *under laws so far unknown to science.*" A certain amount of ozone is necessary, they wisely say, for breathing purposes, and the circulation of the blood. On the other hand "too much of ozone irritates the respiratory organs, and an excess of more than 1% of it in the air kills him who breathes it." This is proceeding on rather occult lines. "The real ozone is the Elixir of Life," says *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 144, 2nd foot-note. Let the reader compare the above with what he will find stated in the same work about oxygen viewed from the hermetic and occult standpoint (*Vide* pp. 113 and 114, Vol. II) and he may comprehend the better what some Theosophists think of the present influenza.

It thus follows that the mystically inclined correspondent who wrote in *Novoyé Vremya* (No. 4931, Nov. 19th, old style, 1889) giving sound advice on the subject of the influenza, then just appeared—knew what he was talking about. Summarizing the idea, he stated as follows:

... It becomes thus evident that the real causes of this simultaneous spread of the epidemic all over the Empire under the most varied meteorological conditions and climatic changes—are to be sought elsewhere than in the unsatisfactory hygienical and sanitary conditions. . . . The search for the causes which generated the disease and caused it to spread is not incumbent upon the physicians alone, but *would be the right duty of meteorologists, astronomers, physicists, and naturalists in general*, separated officially and substantially from medical men.

This raised a professional storm. The modest suggestion was tabooed and derided; and once more an Asiatic country—China, this time—was sacrificed as a scapegoat to the sin of FOHAT and his too active progeny. When royalty and the rulers of this sub-lunary sphere have been sufficiently decimated by influenza and other kindred and unknown evils, perhaps the turn of the Didymj of Science may come. This will be only a just punishment for

their despising the "occult" sciences, and sacrificing truth to personal prejudices.

Meanwhile, the last death song of the cyclic Swan has commenced; only few are they who heed it, as the majority has ears merely not to hear, and eyes—to remain blind. Those who do, however, find the cyclic song sad, very sad, and far from melodious. They assert that besides influenza and other evils, half of the civilized world's population is threatened with violent death, this time thanks to the conceit of the men of *exact* Science, and the all grasping selfishness of speculation. This is what the new craze of "electric lighting" promises every large city before the dying cycle becomes a corpse. These are facts, and not any "crazy speculations of ignorant Theosophists." Of late Reuter sends almost daily such agreeable warnings as this on electric wires in general, and electric wires in America—especially:

Another fatal accident, arising from the system of overhead electric lighting wires, is reported today from Newburgh, New York State. It appears that a horse while being driven along touched an iron awning-post with his nose, and fell down as if dead. A man, who rushed to assist in raising the animal, touched the horse's head-stall and immediately dropped dead, and another man who attempted to lift the first, received a terrible shock. The cause of the accident seems to have been that an electric wire had become slack and was lying upon an iron rod extending from the awning-post to a building, and that the full force of the current was passing down the post into the ground. The insulating material of the wire had become thoroughly saturated with rain. (*Morning Post*, Jan. 21.)

This is a cheerful prospect, and looks indeed as if it were one of the "last songs of the Swan" of *practical* civilization. But, there *is* balm in Gilead—even at this eleventh hour of our jaw-breaking and truth-kicking century. Fearless clergymen summon up courage and dare to express publicly their actual feelings, with thorough contempt for "the utter humbug of the cheap 'religious talk' which obtains in the present day."² They are daily mustering new forces; and hitherto rabidly conservative daily papers fear not to allow their correspondents, when occasion requires, to fly into the venerable faces of *Cant*, and Mrs. Grundy. It is true that the subject

² Revd. Hugh B. Chapman. Vicar St. Luke's Camberwell, in *Morning Post*, January 21st.

which brought out the wholesome though unwelcome truth, in the *Morning Post*, was worthy of such an exception. A correspondent, Mr. W. M. Hardinge, speaking of Sister Rose Gertrude, who has just sailed for the Leper Island of Molokai suggests that—"a portrait of this young lady should somehow be added to one of our national galleries" and adds:

Mr. Edward Clifford would surely be the fitting artist. I, for one, would willingly contribute to the permanent recording, by some adequate painter, of whatever manner of face it may be that shrines so saintly a soul. Such a subject—too rare, alas, in England—should be more fruitful than precept.³

Amen. Of precepts and tall talk in fashionable churches people have more than they bargain for; but of really practical Christ-like work in daily life—except when it leads to the laudation and mention of names of the would-be philanthropists in public papers—we see *nil*. Moreover, such a subject as the voluntary Calvary chosen by Sister Rose Gertrude is "too rare" indeed, anywhere, without speaking of England. The young heroine, like her noble predecessor, Father Damien,⁴ is a true Theosophist in daily life and practice—the latter the greatest ideal of every genuine follower of the Wisdom-religion. Before such work, of practical Theosophy, religion and dogma, theological and scholastic differences, nay even esoteric knowledge itself are but secondary accessories, accidental details. All these must give precedence to and disappear before Altruism (real Buddha- and Christ-like altruism, of course, not the theoretical twaddle of Positivists) as the flickering tongues of gas light in street lamps pale and vanish before the rising sun. Sister Rose Gertrude is not only a great and saintly heroine, but also a spiritual mystery, an EGO not to be fathomed on merely intellectual or even psychic lines. Very true, we hear of whole nunneries having volunteered for the same work at Molokai, and we readily believe it, though this statement is made more for the glorification of Rome than for Christ and His work. But, even if true, the offer is no parallel. We have known nuns who were ready to walk across a prairie on fire to escape convent life. One of them confessed in an agony of despair that death was sweet and even the prospect of *physical tortures* in hell was preferable to life in a convent and its *moral tortures*. To such, the prospect of buying a few years of freedom and fresh air at the

³ *Loc. cit.*

⁴ Vide "Key to Theosophy," p. 239, what Theosophists think of Father Damien.

price of dying from leprosy is hardly a sacrifice but a choice of the lesser of two evils. But the case of Sister Rose Gertrude is quite different. She gave up a life of personal freedom, a quiet home and loving family, all that is dear and near to a young girl, to perform unostentatiously a work of the greatest heroism, a most ungrateful task, by which she cannot even save from death and suffering her fellow men, but only soothe and alleviate their moral and physical tortures. She sought no notoriety and shrank from the admiration or even the help of the public. She simply did the bidding of *her* MASTER—to the very letter. She prepared to go unknown and unrewarded in this life to an almost certain death, preceded by years of incessant physical torture from the most loathsome of all diseases. And she did it, not as the Scribes and Pharisees who perform their prescribed duties in the open streets and public Synagogues, but verily as the Master had commanded; alone, in the secluded closet of her inner life and face to face only with “her Father in secret,” trying to conceal the grandest and noblest of all human acts, as another tries to hide a crime.

Therefore, we are right in saying that—in this our century at all events—Sister Rose Gertrude is, as was Father Damien before her—a *spiritual mystery*. She is the rare manifestation of a “Higher Ego,” free from the trammels of all the elements of its Lower one; influenced by these elements only so far as the errors of her terrestrial sense-perceptions—with regard to religious form—seem to bear a true witness to that which is still human in her Personality—namely, her reasoning powers. Thence the ceaseless and untiring self-sacrifice of such natures to what appears *religious* duty, but which in sober truth is the very essence and *esse* of the dormant Individuality—“divine compassion,” which is “no attribute” but verily “the law of laws, eternal Harmony, Alaya’s SELF”⁵ It is this compassion, crystallized in our very being, that whispers night and day to such as Father Damien and Sister Rose Gertrude—“Can there be bliss when there are men who suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the others cry?” Yet, “Personality”—having been blinded by training and religious education to the real presence and nature of the HIGHER SELF—recognizes not its voice, but confusing it in its helpless ignorance with the external and extraneous Form, which it was taught to regard as a divine Reality—it sends heavenward and outside instead of addressing

⁵ See “Voice of the Silence,” pp. 69 and 71.

them inwardly, thoughts and prayers, the realization of which is in its SELF. It says in the beautiful words of Dante Rossetti, but with a higher application:

. For lo! thy law is passed
That this my love should manifestly be
To serve and honour thee;
And so I do; and my delight is full,
Accepted by the servant of thy rule.

How came this blindness to take such deep root in human nature? Eastern philosophy answers us by pronouncing two deeply significant words among so many others misunderstood by our present generation—*Maya* and *Avidya*, or “Illusion” and that which is rather the opposite of, or the absence of knowledge, in the sense of esoteric science, and not “ignorance” as generally translated.

To the majority of our casual critics the whole of the aforesaid will appear, no doubt, as certain of Mrs. Partington’s learned words and speeches. Those who believe that they have every mystery of nature at their fingers’ ends, as well as those who maintain that official science alone is entitled to solve for Humanity the problems which are hidden far away in the complex constitution of man—will never understand us. And, unable to realize our true meaning, they may, raising themselves on the patterns of modern negation, endeavour, as they always have, to push away with their scientific mops the waters of the great ocean of occult knowledge. But the waves of *Gupta Vidya* have not reached these shores to form no better than a slop and puddle, and serious contest with them will prove as unequal as Dame Partington’s struggle with the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Well, it matters little anyhow, since thousands of Theosophists will easily understand us. After all, the earth-bound watch-dog, chained to matter by prejudice and preconception, may bark and howl at the bird taking its flight beyond the heavy terrestrial fog—but it can never stop its soaring, nor can our inner perceptions be prevented by our official and limited five senses from searching for, discovering, and often solving, problems hidden far beyond the reach of the latter—hence, beyond also the powers of discrimination of those who deny a sixth and seventh sense in man.

The earnest Occultist and Theosophist, however, sees and recognizes psychic and spiritual mysteries and profound secrets of

nature in every flying particle of dust, as much as in the giant manifestations of human nature. For him there exist proofs of the existence of a universal Spirit-Soul everywhere, and the tiny nest of the colibri offers as many problems as Brahâmâ's golden egg. Yea, he recognizes all this, and bowing with profound reverence before the mystery of his own inner shrine, he repeats with Victor Hugo:

Le nid que l'oiseau batit
Si petit
Est une chose profonde.
L'œuf, ote de la foret
Manquerait
A l'equilibre du monde.

PREMATURE AND PHENOMENAL GROWTHS

A RUSSIAN Theosophist in a letter dated November 1883, writes as follows:

The Petersburg and Moscow papers are greatly concerned with the miraculous growth of a child, which has been scientifically recorded by Medical papers. On the outskirts of Siberia, in a small village in the family of a peasant named Savelieff, a daughter was born in October 1881. The child, though very large at its birth, began exhibiting a phenomenal development only at the age of three months when she began teething. At five months she had all her teeth; at seven she began to walk, and at eight walked as well as any of us, pronounced words as might only a child two years old, and measured—nearly a yard in her height! When eighteen months old she spoke fluently, stood one arshene and a half (over four feet) in her stockings, was proportionately large; and with her very dark face, and long hair streaming down her back, talking as only a child 12 years old could talk, she exhibited moreover a bust and bosom as developed as those of a girl of seventeen! She is a marvel to all who know her from her birth. The local board of physicians from the neighbouring town took charge of her for scientific purposes.

We find the fact corroborated in the *Moscow Gazette*, the paper giving us, moreover, a second instance just come under the notice of science, of another such phenomenal growth.

A Herr Schromeyer of Hamburg, has a son, born in 1869—now a boy of 13, and his tenth child. From his birth he arrested every one's attention by his *supernaturally* rapid development. Instead of damaging, it seemed but to improve his health, which has been always excellent. A few months after his birth his muscular system increased so much, that when one year old [his] voice began to lose its childish tones and changed. Its deep basso attracted very soon the attention of some physicians. Soon after, his beard grew, and it became so thick as to compel his parents to shave it every two or three days. His infantine features, *very dark*, were gradually replaced by the face of an adult, and at five he was mistaken by every stranger for a young man of twenty. His limbs are normal, strictly proportionate and very fine. At six he was a full grown and perfectly developed

young man. Professor Virchoff, the celebrated physiologist, accompanied by several learned authorities, examined the boy several times, and is reported, when doubt as to the age of the boy had become no longer possible—to have given his certificate to the effect that the young boy was entirely and fully developed.

A similar case took place in a Georgian family of Asiatics, at Tiflis in the year 1865. A boy of four was found to have become a full adult. He was taken to the hospital and lived there under the eye of the Government physicians, who subjected him to the most extraordinary experiments,—of which, most likely, he died at the age of seven. His parents—superstitious and ignorant people—had made several attempts to kill him, under the impression he was the devil incarnate. There remains to this day a photograph of this bearded baby in the writer's family. Two other cases—nearly similar—the consequences of which were that two cousins in a village of Southern France, became respectively father and mother at the age of eight and seven, are on record in the *Annals of Medicine*. Such cases are rare; yet we know of more than a dozen well authenticated instances of the same from the beginning of this century alone.

We are asked to explain and give thereupon our "occult views." We will try an explanation. We ask no one to believe; we simply give our personal opinion identical with that of other occultists. The latter statement, however, necessitates a small preface.

Every race and people has its old legends and prophecies concerning an unavoidable "End of the world," the pious portions of civilized Christian nations having, moreover, evolved in advance a whole programme for the destruction of our planet. Thus the Millenarians of America and Europe expect an instantaneous disintegration of our earth, followed by a sudden disappearance of the wicked and the survival of the few elect. After this catastrophe, we are assured, the latter will remain in the service of "Christ, who upon his new advent will personally reign on earth a thousand years"—(on its *astral* skeleton, of course, since its physical body will have disappeared). The Mohammedans give another tale. The world's destruction will be preceded by the advent of an *Imam*, whose presence alone will cause the sudden death of the whole unclean brood of *Kaffirs*; the promised "Heaven" of Mohammed will then shift down its headquarters, and the paradisaical *Houris* will roam about at the service of every faithful son of

the Prophet. Hindus and Buddhists have again a different version; the former believe in the *Kalki* Avatar and the latter in the advent of Maitreya Buddha. The *true* Occultist however—whether Asiatic or European (the latter still to be found, *rara-avis* though he be) has a doctrine to this effect, which he has hitherto kept to himself. It is a theory, based on the correct knowledge of the *Past* and the never failing analogy in Nature to guide the Initiate in his prevision of future events—were even his psychic gifts to be denied and refused to be taken into account.

Now, what the Occultists say, is this: humanity is on the descending pathway of its cycle. The rear-guard of the 5th race is crossing slowly the apex of its evolution and will soon find itself having passed the turning point. And, as the descent is always more rapid than the ascent, men of the new coming (the 6th) race are beginning to drop in occasionally. Such children regarded in our days by official science as exceptional monstrosities, are simply the pioneers of that race. There is a prophecy in certain Asiatic old books couched in the following terms, the sense of which we may make clearer by adding to it a few words in brackets.

And as the fourth (race) was composed of Red-yellow which faded into Brown-white (bodies), so the fifth will fade out into white-brown (the white races becoming gradually darker). The sixth and seventh *Manushi* (men?) will be born adults; and will know of no old age, though their years will be many. As the Krita, Treta, Dvapara and Kali (ages) have been each decreasing in excellence (physical as well as moral) so the ascending—Dvapara, Treta, and Krita will be increasing in every excellence. As the life of man lasted 400 (years in the first, or Krita Yuga), 300 (years in Treta), 200 (years in Dvapara) and 100 (in the present Kali age); so in the next (the 6th Race) (the natural age of man) will be (gradually increased) 200, then 300 and 400 (in the two last yugas)

Thus we find¹ from the above that the characteristics of the race that will follow ours are—a darker skin, shortened period of infancy and old age, or in other words a growth and development that in the present age (to the profane) appear quite miraculous.

It is not the sacred legends of the East alone that throw out hints on the future physiology of man. The Jewish Bible (See Genesis, Chap. vi, verse 4) implies as much, when speaking of antediluvian

¹ The seven Rounds decrease and increase in their respective durations, as well as the seven races in each. Thus the 4th Rounds as well as every 4th race are the shortest, while the 1st and 7th Rounds as the 1st and 7th root races are the longest.

racés (the 3rd race) it tells us, "There were giants in the earth, in those days," and makes a distinct difference between "the sons of God," and "the daughters of man." Therefore, to us, Occultists, believers in the knowledge of old, such isolated instances of premature development, are but so many more proofs of the end of one cycle and—the beginning of another.

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